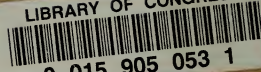


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No. 384

The Fairy Woods

A PLAY FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

in a Prologue

and two acts.

by

IRENE JEAN CRANDALL

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2001

THE FAIRY WOODS

BY

IRENE JEAN CRANDALL

CHARACTERS:

EDITH (*about ten years old*)

TOM (*about eleven years old*)

FLOWER FAIRIES

QUEEN ROSE

KING PEONY

PRINCESS VIOLET

PRINCESS LILY

CLOVER

MADAM TULIP

BUTTERCUP

JONQUIL

PRINCE BUTTERFLY

SIR FIREFLY

BUMBLE BEE

Other Fairies of the Flower Court — Cowslips, Poppies, Daisies, Corn-flowers, Daffodils, Forget-me-nots and Wild Roses.

PROLOGUE: *At the edge of the Woods.*

ACT I. *The Fairy Woods. Day-break.*

ACT II. *The Fairy Woods. Evening.*

THE FAIRY WOODS

SUGGESTIONS FOR COSTUMES.

All the Flower Fairies wear caps in the form of the flowers they represent, green stockings for stems and dresses or suits the color of their flowers.

The caps can be made, at home or school, of crepe paper, or may be ordered from Denison's.

KING PEONY. Flaming red suit with peony cap.

QUEEN ROSE. Delicate pink dress with rose cap.

PRINCESS VIOLET. Violet dress and cap.

PRINCESS LILY. White dress and lily cap.

CLOVER. Pink and white dress with clover cap.

MADAM TULIP. Showy red and yellow costume with tulip cap.

BUTTERCUP. Yellow dress with buttercup cap.

JONQUIL. Yellow suit with jonquil cap.

EVENING PRIMROSE. Pale yellow dress with primrose cap.

PRINCE BUTTERFLY. Brilliant yellow and black costume with wings.

SIR FIREFLY. Green costume with green gauze wings. He carries an electric flash light.

BUMBLE BEE. Black costume with yellow stripes across the breast. Gauze wings.

TWILIGHT MOTH. Gray costume with wings.

The wings can be made of tarlatan, wire and spangles, or they may be bought ready made.

THE FAIRY WOODS

SUGGESTIONS FOR STAGING.

One stage setting will do for the entire play, because the prologue at the edge of the woods can be played in the front part of the stage as set for the other acts.

If it is possible to have leafy boughs and ferns for the Fairy Woods, the stage can be made very attractive with the natural foliage.

If real green boughs cannot be obtained, the artificial foliage used for trimming store windows and also for hats can be used very effectively, or good results can be had with little expense by making foliage out of crepe paper.

The fallen log can be made out of a barrel covered with brown burlap and painted with green for moss.

Effective side drops can be made by cutting leaves out of wall paper and pasting them on green mosquito netting or tarlatan.

The mossy throne of the Flower King and Queen can be made easily by covering boxes or a low seat with moss green cloth.

In fact, it is possible for the director and participants to make all the costumes and the stage settings with little expense.

The play can be given out-of-doors.

THE FAIRY WOODS

NOTE.

“THE FAIRY WOODS” can be played either indoors or outdoors and can be simply or elaborately staged, according to circumstances. The scene of the Fairy Woods may easily present as picture that will linger in the memory of the audience.

If a small cast is desired, all but the speaking parts can be dropped or only a few Flower Fairies used for the dances. All parts may be played by girls, if so desired.

The music during the play and between the acts will add much to the play if familiar flower songs are used.

PROLOGUE.

SCENE. *At the edge of the Woods.*

(When the curtain rises EDITH is lying on the ground, chin in hands, elbows on ground, absorbed in a book of fairy tales. TOM is practising for mumble-the-peg. For several minutes he throws the knife with great pride in his achievement.)

TOM. *(turning to EDITH)* I bet you can't do that.

(EDITH, absorbed in her story, does not answer.)

TOM. *(impatiently)* I say, Sis, can't you hear?

(EDITH starts and looks up)

EDITH. What is it? I was reading such a beautiful story.

TOM. (*crossing his heart*) Cross my heart and wish to die.

EDITH. Well — if you put a piece of that wood, sorrel in your shoe and walk through the woods, your eyes will be opened and you will see the fairies that live in the flowers and trees. Why — the woods are full of these dear little folks.

TOM. (*scornfully*) Who told you that stuff? That putting a weed like that in your shoe would make you see things.

EDITH. (*with conviction*) Grandma told me and her mother told her. Once two little girls were going home after they had milked the cows. As they walked along the sountry road in the twilight, Ruth was surprised to see little fairies dancing on every bit of rising ground. "Oh, look" she cried, "See the dear little fairies." May looked but she didn't see them.

TOM. Of course not. Nothing but grass and flowers, I bet.

EDITH. When the girls came home Ruth told everybody what she had seen, but nobody would believe her. She was so discouraged that she cried.

TOM. Just like a girl. (TOM *turns a hand spring*)

EDITH. (*impatiently*) Oh, listen to me. Can't you keep still one minute?

TOM. No, Dad says I'm a jumping-jack.
(EDITH *tries not to laugh and goes on with her story*)

EDITH. When Ruth took off her shoes that night, what do you think she found?

TOM. Sand.

EDITH. No, stupid. She wasn't walking on the beach, but in the woods. She found a piece of wood sorrel in her right shoe - a piece like this. (*She holds up the plant with its delicate star-like flowers*) Then she knew that it was the tiny plant that had opened her eyes to the beautiful things in the woods and had given her the power of seeing the fairies that were invisible to other folks.

(*TOM goes up behind EDITH and pulls her hair. EDITH jerks away and starts to slap him, but thinks better of it.*)

EDITH. Stop, tease.

TOM. Wh, I didn't do anything. It must have been an invisible fairy that pulled your hair. Do you think that I can see fairies if I put some of that (*pointing contemptuously*) in my shoe?

EDITH. Yes, you can see fairies sitting on their toadstools and drinking from acorn cups.

TOM. Well, I've been through the woods hundreds of times and I have never seen anything like that. I don't believe it.

EDITH. (*going up to TOM and grasping his arm*) Oh, Tom, if you would only believe you would see. You must believe first.

TOM. No, seeing is believing.

EDITH. Let's try the wood sorrel.

TOM. What a silly idea!

EDITH. (*clapping her hands enthusiastically*) I'll tell you what we'll do. You put some of the wood sorrel in your shoe and I'll put some in mine and we'll walk through the woods and see what we'll see.

TOM. (*scornfully*) We won't see anything but trees and grass and wild flowers - and bugs.

EDITH. Let's try it and if we don't see the fairies, I'll never say another word about them.

TOM. All right. Just to prove to you that fairies are all nonsense, I'll do it. Give me a piece.

EDITH. Goody.

(*She hands TOM a piece of the wood sorrel. They sit down on the ground and each takes off a shoe and puts the sorrel in it*)

EDITH. Oh, I'm so excited. (*A little anxiously, she stops in the process of putting on her shoe*)

I wonder if this is the best time to go.

TOM. What difference does the time make?

EDITH. Lots of difference to the fairies. I've heard that a good time to see them is very early in the morning when the dew is still on the grass and before human beings are out to disturb them. Let's get up very early tomorrow morning.

TOM. I bet I can get up before you do, sleepy-head.

EDITH. Well, we'll see who is here first tomorrow morning ready to start through the woods. Don't tell anybody about it.

TOM. All right.

EDITH. And don't forget the wood sorrel that will open your eyes to all the hidden beauties of the woods.

CURTAIN.

ACT ONE

SCENE. *The Fairy Woods at day-break. When the curtain rises KING PEONY and QUEEN ROSE are seated upon a mossy bank at C. The PRINCESS LILY stands to the right of her mother, the QUEEN, and little BUTTERCUP sits on a toadstool D. R. There is a fallen log D. L.*

QUEEN ROSE, dressed in delicate pink, is proud and stately.

KING PEONY, in flaming red, is fat and pompous.

PRINCESS LILY, in pure white, is tall, slender and haughty.

BUTTERCUP, in yellow, is a wee chubby thing.

QUEEN ROSE. I am very much discouraged about our daughter Violet. She is far too shy and modest for a Princess.

KING PEONY. Yes, she hangs her head and shrinks from sight like a common country maid, when she should carry herself as befits one born to court life.

QUEEN ROSE. Now, the Princess Lily, (*turning to LILY*) is so different. She is proud, stately and dignified as a daughter of ours should be.

PRINCESS LILY. (*proudly*) I try to remember that I am a flower princess and that my father and mother are king and queen.

KING PEONY. (*pompously*) Quite right, my daughter. Never forget that we reign in the kingdom of flower fairies and that your father is descended from a moonbeam.

QUEEN ROSE. Princess Lily is a credit to us, but what shall we do about Violet?

KING PEONY. You should have brought her up differently.

QUEEN ROSE. (*sharply*) I'm sure that I am not entirely responsible for her bringing up. I think you ought to do something.

KING PEONY. Engage a governess for her who will teach her correct deportment.

QUEEN ROSE. You know very well that we have had governesses and governesses, but they have not been satisfactory. (*in despair*) I don't know what to do.

LILY. Why not send for Madame Tulip? I have heard that she is the best governess to teach deportment in all the flower kingdom.

QUEEN ROSE. (*thinking*) Madame Tulip. Let me see. I wonder if I know her. Is she well recommended?

LILY. Yes, indeed. She has taught in some of the best flower families.

QUEEN ROSE. She may be just the one for Violet. What do you think, your Majesty? (*She turns to KING PEONY*)

KING PEONY. (*with decision*) We will send for Madam Tulip at once. (*He calls*) Buttercup. (*Little BUTTERCUP presents herself before the King and Queen*)

BUTTERCUP. (*making a low courtesy*) Yes, your Majesty.

KING PEONY. Go to Madam Tulip and tell her that his Royal Highness, King Peony, commands her presence at his court immediately.

BUTTERCUP. Yes, your Majesty.

QUEEN ROSE. And stop at the mossy bank down by the brook and tell the Princess Violet that her mother and father wish to see her at once.

BUTTERCUP. Yes, your Royal Highness. I will carry your messages as fast as I can.

(BUTTERCUP goes out. EDITH and TOM come in quietly from R. They stop at the side near a big tree. EDITH is so excited and delighted that she can hardly keep still. TOM is puzzled. He shakes his head as if he did not know what to make of the scene before him. Then he pinches himself to see if he is awake. EDITH whispers something in his ear and they sit down under the big tree to watch the flower fairies, who are entirely unconscious of the presence of the children.)

QUEEN ROSE. I do hope that Madame Tulip will prove a good governess. I want Violet to improve before the ball we give for Prince Butterfly.

PRINCESS LILY. When is the ball, mother?

QUEEN ROSE. Tomorrow night by moonlight.

LILY. That is very soon.

QUEEN ROSE. Not too soon for a good teacher to show some improvement in her pupil. I am not unreasonable, but I expect results.

KING PEONY. Here comes Madame Tulip now.

(MADAM TULIP comes in from L. She wears a showy red and yellow costume and is stiff and haughty, carrying her head high. She presents herself before the King and Queen, making a deep bow.)

KING PEONY. Madam Tulip, we have sent for you because we have heard that you are a good governess to teach deportment.

MADAM TULIP. Your Majesties, I have taught the daughters of some of the best families in the flower kingdom and they have become as haughty as tulips and as stiff as pokers.

QUEEN ROSE. Then you are the governess we want for the Princess Violet. She is far too shy and timid for her station in life.

MADAM TULIP. I am at your service.

QUEEN ROSE. The Princess Violet is a sweet child, but she lacks the pride and dignity that a daughter of ours should have. It will be your task to teach her to carry herself as a Princess should.

MADAM TULIP. After a short time under my instruction the Princess Violet will have such an erect carriage that even the box trees and the yews will envy her.

KING PEONY. That's exactly what we want.

(PRINCESS VIOLET comes in with BUTTERCUP. She is dressed in violet and is sweet, shy and drooping. She goes up to the mossy throne timidly and kneels to her father and mother.)

VIOLET. (*rising*) Buttercup says that you wish to see me.

QUEEN ROSE. Yes, Violet, we have engaged a new governess for you. Madam Tulip, the Princess Violet. (VIOLET bows to MADAM TULIP) She will teach you to carry yourself as a Princess should.

VIOLET. (*demurely*) Yes, mother.

KING PEONY. Your mother and I have been very much disappointed in you because you are so shy and hang your head. We wish you to be proud and stately like your sister Lily.

VIOLET. I'm afraid that I can never be like her. Violets and Lilies are so different. I know I am only a modest flower fairy, but I am content and I try to be sweet to all, rich and poor.

QUEEN ROSE. That's just the trouble.

MADAM TULIP. I will teach her to carry her head high, so that even the Hollyhocks on their high stalks will not be stiffer than your daughter, the Princess.

(JONQUIL comes running in, all out of breath. He is dressed in a light yellow suit. He goes to the King and Queen and kneels.)

QUEEN ROSE. What is it, Jonquil? Do you bring a message?

JONQUIL. *(rising and finally getting his breath)* I have news for your majesties.

KING PEONY. Not bad news I hope.

JONQUIL. That depends. Clover is on her way to visit you. (QUEEN ROSE *throws up her hands* and BUTTERCUP *tumbles off her toadstool*)

QUEEN ROSE. What! Our little country cousin coming to court.

KING PEONY. I wonder who invited her. Did you? (To QUEEN ROSE)

QUEEN ROSE. I believe that once - a long time ago - I did give her one of those general invitations that one gives out of politeness, but I never dreamed that she would accept it.

LILY. I suppose she will be very countrified and that we will blush for shame at her manners.

QUEEN ROSE. It is very awkward to have her come just now, when we are going to have the ball for Prince Butterfly.

VIOLET. (*excited*) Prince Butterfly? Is he coming to Flower Court?

KING PEONY. Yes, I sent an invitation by South Wind several days ago to Prince Butterfly and his friend Sir Firefly.

VIOLET. How lovely!

QUEEN ROSE. You can't expect them to notice you unless you improve in your manners.

VIOLET. (*hanging her head*) I suppose not.

QUEEN ROSE. All the flower fairies like Prince Butterfly and wish to have him for a friend, but he flits from one to another and has never been able to make up his mind to choose one.

LILY. He must be very particular.

KING PEONY. He is and that is why we must remember our manners when he comes.

QUEEN ROSE. Oh, I have so many troubles and now Jonquil says that Clover is coming to Flower Court just when we have no place for her. I don't know what I'm going to do. It makes me faint to think of it. Fan me, Lily.

(LILY fans QUEEN ROSE with a roseleaf fan. They all look anxiously at the QUEEN, but she soon revives.)

VIOLET. (*sweetly*) I think it's lovely that Clover is coming. I know I shall like her.

QUEEN ROSE. (*crossly*) That is just like you, Violet. You haven't a bit of proper pride.

MADAM TULIP. (*to VIOLET*) Always hold your head high.

(VIOLET tries to obey her governess by throwing up her head. A buzzing sound is heard and little BUTTERCUP runs across the stage and hides behind the fallen log.)

KING PEONY. What's the matter, Buttercup?

BUTTERCUP. (*peeking out*) Old Bumble Bee is coming and he's so sharp and stinging, I'm afraid of him.

KING PEONY. He is a grouchy old fellow.

QUEEN ROSE. He's always finding fault and saying something mean about somebody.

JONQUIL. Here he comes.

(BUMBLE BEE *comes in with a buzzing sound.*

He is dressed in a black velvet suit with yellow bands across his breast and wears

BUMBLE BEE. (*crossly*) Is Clover here?

QUEEN ROSE. No, she is not. Why should you look for her here?

BUMBLE BEE. She has left the farm where she has lived all her life and where everybody loves her and I was told she was on her way to your court. I want to find her.

KING PEONY. What for?

BUMBLE BEE. (*sharply*) That's my affair.

KING PEONY. You needn't be so cross about it.

BUMBLE BEE. I don't want folks to ask me questions. It makes me mad. (*Buzz*) If 'Clover isn't here, I'm going on.

QUEEN ROSE. Pray do, Bumble Bee. We have no wish to keep you.

(BUMBLE BEE *goes off and BUTTERCUP comes from her hiding place with a sigh of relief.*)

BUTTERCUP. Has he gone?

QUEEN ROSE. Yes, thank goodness.

VIOLET. I'm glad he didn't find Clover. He looks so cross, but he may have a good heart.

PRINCESS LILY. He's an old grouch.

QUEEN ROSE. I don't see how we can entertain Clover now.

KING PEONY. Perhaps she will not stay long.

LILY. Let's hope she'll make her visit short.

(CLOVER comes in from R. She is dressed in deep pink and white and is cheery, simple and natural. She carries her baggage in a large green leaf satchel. She stops, looks around and hesitates.)

CLOVER. Is this the court of King Peony and Queen Rose?

(All except VIOLET assume a stiff and haughty air and CLOVER is bewildered.)

KING PEONY. Yes, my girl, this is Flower Court.

CLOVER. (*with hesitation*) I have come to visit my cousins, (*looking around*) but perhaps I had better not stay.

QUEEN ROSE. (*stiffly*) You are welcome, of course, but we thought this was a strange time of the year for you to leave the farm.

CLOVER. It is beautiful on the farm now. The crickets are chirping, the busy ants are at work and the bees are gathering the honey. The farm is a happy, busy place, but I wanted to see a little of the world. (*Wistfully*) You see I have never been away from home before, and I have heard so much about your wonderful Court of Fairy Flowers.

PRINCESS LILY. Very true, but your visit is so unexpected.

CLOVER. I'm afraid I have come at the wrong time.

QUEEN ROSE. You may stay until after breakfast, but I think that you had better go back to the farm this afternoon.

CLOVER. Of course, if I am not welcome I will go home right away.

(She looks disappointed and almost ready to cry)

KING PEONY. There - there girl - don't cry.

QUEEN ROSE. Some other time we shall be glad to have you pay us a visit.

CLOVER. *(wistfully)* I wanted to see the world, but it is so different from what I expected. I was happier on the farm.

QUEEN ROSE. That's just it, Clover, we all are happier when we stay in our own places. Buttercup, what time is it by yonder dandelion?

(BUTTERCUP runs to the edge of the woods and blows five puffs)

BUTTERCUP. Your Royal Highness, it is five o'clock by the dandelion.

QUEEN ROSE. The sun is rising in the east.

KING PEONY. Yes, it is day-break and all the fairies must go back to their flowers, for soon mortals will be walking through the woods.

QUEEN ROSE. Before we part for the day, we must have breakfast. Buttercup, bring the strawberries from the dell and the fairy cheeses from the mallow plant. Jonquil, find some honey for us and bring the dew in acorn cups.

(The fairies obey orders and hurry about bringing the refreshments, first to the Queen and

King and then to the others. VIOLET and CLOVER keep close together. TOM jumps up and starts forward as if he would join the fairies at their breakfast. EDITH holds him back...She puts her finger on her lips as if she would tell TOM to be silent. She finally succeeds in restraining him)

VIOLET. (to CLOVER) Bumble Bee was here looking for you.

CLOVER. (laughing) Oh, the funny old thing. I suppose he made a fuss.

VIOLET. Yes, indeed. Buttercup was afraid of him.

CLOVER. He's rough and he seems cross, but he is really kind-hearted and he's a good friend to me and my family.

BUTTERCUP. (coming back with the strawberry) Oh, dear, I've torn my dress on a thorn. (Begins to cry)

MADAM TULIP. Careless child.

CLOVER. Never mind, dear. Bring me a pine needle and I'll mend it for you.

(BUTTERCUP brings a pine needle and CLOVER mends her dress.)

VIOLET. (to her mother) Queen Mother, what are we going to have for supper when Prince Butterfly comes to our ball?

QUEEN ROSE. Hush, Violet. We did not wish you to speak of that now. (With a look at CLOVER).

VIOLET. (innocently) Why not? You just told us about Prince Butterfly coming.

QUEEN ROSE. Quite true, but it may not be possible to invite every one to the ball.

CLOVER. (*looking bewildered*) I don't understand. We don't have balls at the farm, only snowballs on the bushes in the front yard. I love to see a ball.

QUEEN ROSE. You couldn't be expected to know about these pleasures of court life nor take part in them.

VIOLET. — Oh, mother, I'm sure that Clover would enjoy the party.

QUEEN ROSE. We'll say no more about it, Princess Violet.

KING PEONY. Now breakfast is over, we must go back to our flowers before mortals see us.

QUEEN ROSE. Let's have one dance before we leave.

KING PEONY. Here are the Poppies and Daisies coming through the woods now. We'll have these little fairies dance for us as they sway on their stems when the Wind hurries across the fields.

(*Several POPPIES and DAISIES come in with dancing steps. The POPPIES are in red and the DAISIES in white. When the dance is ended they take their places back of the mossy throne.*)

CLOVER. Your Majesties, would you like to have me dance for you?

QUEEN ROSE. (*in surprise*) You? Oh, no, we never have farm dances here.

CLOVER. I thought dancing was just being happy with your feet. When the sunbeams smile at me and the gentle breezes blow kisses, I dance because my heart is gay.

QUEEN ROSE. Some other time, Clover, you may show us your way of dancing, but now it's time for us to go, before any mortals come to the woods.

CLOVER. (*in a disappointed tone*) Just as you wish.

PRINCESS LILY. When shall we meet again?

KING PEONY. (*rising*) Let all the flower fairies assemble at this place tomorrow night when the Cowslips ring their bells.

QUEEN ROSE. (*rising*) Then we shall dance by the light of the moon and Prince Butterfly and his friend Sir Firefly will be here.

(*They all go off except CLOVER, who stays behind bewildered and sad. She picks up her leaf satchel. VIOLET comes in shyly and slowly. She watches Clover for a minute and then goes up to her.*)

VIOLET. Don't go, Clover.

CLOVER. Yes, I must go home. I'm not wanted here.

VIOLET. I'm sorry that you feel that way. I'm glad you've come and I want to make you happy here.

CLOVER. (*gratefully*) Oh, thank you. You are so kind, Princess Violet.

VIOLET. Don't call me Princess. I'm just simple Violet to you.

CLOVER. (*sweetly and lovingly*) Violet - dear Violet.

VIOLET. Stay with me, I need you for a friend. I'm lonely, sometimes.

(*CLOVER hesitates and then holds out her hand to VIOLET.*)

CLOVER. For you I will stay, but I'm afraid it may make trouble.

VIOLET. No, I don't think so. But there is no time to lose. It's day-break. We must go back to our flowers. We'll meet here when the Cowslips ring their bells.

CURTAIN.

ACT TWO.

(THE FAIRY WOODS by moonlight. The scene is the same as Act I, only it is night. When the curtain goes up there is no one on the stage, but TOM and EDITH asleep under the big tree. The sound of tiny, sweet bells is heard. Then several COWSLIPS come in from R. They are dressed in yellow and carry tiny bells and go out L. Little BUTTERCUP comes in from R, looks around, sees no one, crosses the stage and lies down by the big log. MADAM TULIP'S voice is heard outside, saying, "You must always hold your head high." MADAM TULIP and VIOLET come in from L. The governess is very stiff and haughty and VIOLET is trying to imitate her, but without much success. TOM and EDITH wake up, sit up and rub their eyes, but remain silent while they eagerly watch the fairy drama being acted out before them.)

MADAM TULIP. Princess Violet, hold your head high.

VIOLET. I'm so tired of hearing that. You say it over and over again, like the chorus of a song. Why, when we walk through the Queen's gardens even the parrot says "You must always hold your head high."

MADAM TULIP. (*with dignity*) It is necessary to repeat it to impress it upon your mind. You know that the King and Queen wished a decided improvement in your manners before the ball to-night.

VIOLET. (*sadly*) Oh, I know, but it is no use trying to make a Violet into a Lily, or a Tulip.

I think I was made to be different. There must be a place in the Flower Kingdom for a fairy like me.

MADAM TULIP. But remember your station in life and carry yourself with the dignity becoming a princess.

VIOLET. Oh, dear, I want to forget that I am a princess for just one night. I wonder where the others are. The Cowslips are ringing their bells and it is time to meet. (CLOVER comes in from R.) Here's Clover now.

MADAM TULIP. (*surprised*) I thought that Clover had gone home to the farm.

VIOLET. I asked her to stay. She seemed so disappointed.

MADAM TULIP. The King and Queen will be very much surprised and displeased.

VIOLET. I know, but I couldn't let her go away unhappy.

CLOVER. (*coming forward*) Is this the place?

VIOLET. Yes, Clover, I'm glad you've come so early. I want to talk to you before all the others come.

MADAM TULIP. I will walk down to the big maple tree. Remember, Princess Violet, you must always hold your head high.

(MADAM TULIP *walks off stiff as a poker.*)

CLOVER. Isn't she proud?

VIOLET. (*sighing*) Yes, Clover. Did you ever have a governess like that?

CLOVER. Oh, no, I have never had a governess of any kind. We couldn't afford it. I just grew - just blossomed in the fields.

VIOLET. How lovely! I wish I could be like that - wild and free.

CLOVER. (*with admiration*) But you are a King's daughter. It must be wonderful to be a Flower Princess.

VIOLET. No, it isn't. It's stupid. I hope that you didn't feel unhappy about the way you were received here. You know that court ways are different from farm ways.

CLOVER. So I see. I was unhappy at first (*wistfully*) but I hope that you will learn to love me before I go.

VIOLET. I love you already, Clover. (*Squeezing her*) You're a dear.

CLOVER. You give me a happy feeling around my heart. You're so much like my friends at home.

VIOLET. I'll tell you a secret. I think I really belong on the farm instead of here at court.

CLOVER. Is it going to be a real ball tonight?

VIOLET. Yes, a fairy ball for Prince Butterfly and Sir Firefly.

CLOVER. I do hope I shall meet Prince Butterfly. I have heard so much about him. The Katydids often talk about him and all the flowers I know admire him.

VIOLET. They say that he's wonderful, but I don't suppose that he will notice us. Mother thinks that he will like my sister Lily.

(Buzz - buzz - buzz)

CLOVER. (*startled*) What's that noise?

VIOLET. (*drawing back*) That's old Bumble Bee. Let's run away and hide. He's such a cross old thing with his sharp stings.

CLOVER. Oh, no, he isn't really cross, but we will run away just for fun.

(VIOLET and CLOVER run off to the right while BUMBLE BEE comes in from the left. He looks around, at first sees no one, then spies BUTTERCUP and goes over to her. She jumps up with a start.)

BUTTERCUP. Go away, you horrid old Bumble Bee.

BUMBLE BEE. (*crossly*) Where's Clover?

BUTTERCUP. I don't know. Go away. Ouch.

(BUMBLE BEE wounds BUTTERCUP with his sharp dagger and she falls to the ground with a cry while he goes on. CLOVER and VIOLET come running back at BUTTERCUP'S cry. They go to her and CLOVER kneels beside her)

CLOVER. Poor little Buttercup, are you hurt?

BUTTERCUP. Yes, old Bumble Bee hurt me with

VIOLET. We didn't know you were here.

CLOVER. No, indeed, or we should never have gone off and left you for Bumble Bee.

VIOLET. I'm so sorry.

CLOVER. Don't cry, Buttercup. I know he didn't mean to do it. We'll make you well.

VIOLET. Yes, Clover knows what to do.

CLOVER. Princess Violet, if you will bring some of that cob-web I'll bind up her wound.

(VIOLET goes off for the cob-web and PRINCE BUTTERFLY and SIR FIREFLY come in unobserved by the others. PRINCE BUTTERFLY wears a brilliant yellow and black costume with wings. He is graceful and attractive. FIREFLY wears a green costume with green wings and carries a small electric flash light that he turns on and off as he darts here and

there with light, quick movements. They watch CLOVER caring for BUTTERCUP.)

CLOVER. Don't cry, little Buttercup.

BUTTERCUP. That horrid Bumble Bee frightened me so.

CLOVER. Yes, dear, but I'll tell you a story to make you forget all about it.

BUTTERCUP. (*drying her eyes*) Oh, will you? I love stories.

CLOVER. Jonny Quil met Daffy Dil
One fine day on top of a hill.
Said Mr. Jonny to Miss Daffy,
"Won't you dance and make me
happy?"
Gaily she shook her yellow frill.
"No, sir," laughed pretty Daffy Dil.
But he urged, "Oh, dance with me,
please,
Don't you feel the lovely spring
breeze?"
Daffy Dil replied, "With pleasure,
If the wind blows time and measure."
Then Daffy Dil and Jonny Quil
Gaily danced on top of the hill.

(BUTTERCUP *laughs out loud.*)

VIOLET. (*coming in with the cob-web*) Here's the cob-web.

CLOVER. (*binding up the wound*) That's a good old-fashioned way to heal a wounded flower fairy. My grandmother taught me to do it.

VIOLET. (*with admiration*) How many useful things you know, Clover.

CLOVER. On the farm we have to learn to depend upon ourselves. There, dear Buttercup, you'll soon be well.

BUTTERCUP. Thank you, sweet Clover. You are so kind. (*She puts her arms around CLOVER'S neck and kisses her.*)

PRINCE BUTTERFLY. (*coming forward and looking around*) I wonder if this is the court of King Peony and Queen Rose.

SIR FIREFLY. (*coming forward*) Here is the invitation, written on a piece of birch bark: "King Peony and Queen Rose request the pleasure of Prince Butterfly's company at a fairy ball on All Elves night in the depths of the Fairy Woods by moonlight, when the Cowslips ring their bells."

BUTTERFLY. This must be the time and the place. There are some flower fairies over there.

(VIOLET and CLOVER draw back shyly when they see PRINCE BUTTERFLY and SIR FIREFLY)

BUTTERFLY. Is this the place where the flower fairies' ball is to be held to-night?

CLOVER. (*demurely*) Yes, sir.

BUTTERFLY. Are you one of King Peony's daughters?

CLOVER. Oh, no, I'm only Clover, a country cousin, but this is the Princess Violet.

BUTTERFLY. I'm glad to meet you both. This is my friend Firefly.

FIREFLY. (*bowing*) I am pleased to meet you. I love to see the flower fairies as I dart here and there making the dark places light.

VIOLET. We have been expecting you. I'm

sorry that the King and Queen are not here to welcome you. Old Bumble Bee has hurt little Buttercup and Clover is caring for her.

BUTTERFLY. I see she is a good little nurse.

BUTTERCUP. (*jumping up*) I'm all right now. Clover has made me well.

BUTTERFLY. If I break a wing I shall ask Clover to bind it up for me.

CLOVER. (*modestly*) It's very little I have done.

BUTTERFLY. It's the little deeds of kindness that make the world brighter.

VIOLET. (*to FIREFLY*) Have you come far?

FIREFLY. We've been flying over hill and dale since daybreak.

CLOVER. You've had a longer trip than I have.

BUTTERFLY. Did you come a long way?

CLOVER. Just from the farm.

VIOLET. (*to FIREFLY*) Do tell us about your trip.

FIREFLY. The loveliest sight we saw, before we reached his enchanted spot, (*with a bow to VIOLET and CLOVER*) was down in the glen. It was dark and so I flashed my light, like this, and there was the Twilight Moth hovering about the Evening Primrose and telling her good-night stories.

VIOLET. How lovely! I wish I could see them.

BUTTERFLY. Perhaps you may, for I heard the Evening Primrose say that she would like to come to the fairies' ball tonight.

CLOVER. I do hope they will be here.

BUTTERFLY. Shall we walk down to the brook while we are waiting for the ball to begin?

CLOVER. That would be fun.

BUTTERFLY. Princess Violet, will you show the way?

VIOLET. I'd love to.

BUTTERFLY. And Firefly will light our path.

(FIREFLY and VIOLET start off L followed by CLOVER and PRINCE BUTTERFLY. BUTTERCUP perches herself on the toadstool. KING PEONY and QUEEN ROSE, followed by PRINCESS LILY, come in from R. After them come a retinue of Flower Fairies - COWSLIPS, POPPIES, DAISIES, DAFFODILS, CORN-FLOWERS, FORGET-ME-NOTS and WILD ROSES. The King and Queen seat themselves on the mossy bank, the Princess LILY stands at one side and the other Flower Fairies group themselves about the throne.)

QUEEN ROSE. I hope that everything will go off well at the ball this evening. It is the first time Prince Butterfly has been here and I want to make a good impression on him.

KING PEONY. Don't worry. (*Boastfully*) Our balls have always been successful affairs.

QUEEN ROSE. I'm glad that Clover didn't stay for the ball to-night. I know that her countrified ways would shock Prince Butterfly.

KING PEONY. It was too bad to make the child unhappy, but I suppose it was the best.

QUEEN ROSE. Of course, it was best. We couldn't have our ball spoiled by a country cousin. (*Looking around*) But why don't they come? The moon is rising and the Cowslips are ringing their bells.

KING PEONY. Buttercup, have you seen any of our fairies?

BUTTERCUP. Yes, your Majesty, the Princess

Violet, Madam Tulip and Clover, but they all went away.

QUEEN ROSE. (*in great surprise*) Clover? Did you say Clover was here?

BUTTERCUP. Yes, your Majesty.

QUEEN ROSE. How did it happen? I thought she had gone back to the farm.

BUTTERCUP. The Princess Violet asked her to stay.

PRINCESS LILY. Just like Violet. She has no pride.

QUEEN ROSE. I'm quite upset. My plans are spoiled.

KING PEONY. Now, don't make a fuss. Calm yourself. Worse things might have happened.

BUTTERCUP. Yes, old Bumble Bee might have stung you.

QUEEN ROSE. What do you mean?

BUTTERCUP. Well, old Bumble Bee has been flying around. He hurt me, but Clover took care of me and made me well.

QUEEN ROSE. (*impatiently*) Clover - always Clover. Will I never hear the last of her?

(CLOVER and VIOLET stroll in, followed by PRINCE BUTTERFLY. CLOVER and VIOLET make low bows before the King and Queen.)

KING PEONY. You are late. The bells have been ringing a long time.

VIOLET. We were here earlier, but did not find your majesties and so we walked down to the brook. Prine Butterfly and his friend Sir Firefly are here.

(PRINCE BUTTERFLY and SIR FIREFLY step for-

ward and present themselves to the King and Queen.)

KING PEONY. You are welcome to the court of the Flower Fairies.

QUEEN ROSE. Yes, it gives us great pleasure to receive you, Prince Butterfly and Sir Firefly.

KING PEONY. This is our daughter, the Princess Lily.

(LILY makes a stately bow.)

PRINCE BUTTERFLY. *(bowing)* I'm pleased to meet you.

FIREFLY. *(bowing)* Delighted.

QUEEN ROSE. And our other daughter, the Princess Violet.

(VIOLET smiles with shy sweetness)

BUTTERFLY. We have had the pleasure of meeting the Princess Violet and —

(He turns towards CLOVER but QUEEN ROSE ignores her. There is an embarrasasing pause while CLOVER stands waiting.)

PRINCESS VIOLET. Queen Mother, you have forgotten Clover.

QUEEN ROSE. Oh, yes, this is a little friend who has come up from the farm to spend a few days at court. She happened to arrive just at the time of the ball in your honor, Prince Butterfly, but, of course, it can be arranged —

BUTTERCUP. *(interrupting)* I am very glad she came just at this time.

(QUEEN ROSE looks surprised and turns in astonishment first to KING PEONY and then to

PRINCESS LILY. MADAM TULIP *comes in, stiff and straight, followed by JONQUIL, trying to imitate her.*)

KING PEONY. Good evening, Madam Tulip and Jonquil.

MADAM TULIP. Good evening, your Majesties.

(JONQUIL bows.)

KING PEONY. Madam Tulip, I see that you have made some progress with your pupil.

QUEEN ROSE. Yes, some improvement, although she is not yet as proud as we should like to have her.

MADAM TULIP. I am grateful to your Majesties.

KING PEONY. As a reward for the patience you have shown in instructing the Princess Violet in instructing the Princess Violet in correct deportment. I bestow upon you, Madam Tulip, this token of royal favor, - the order of the red and yellow ribbon. Buttercup.

(BUTTERCUP presents herself before the King and he gives her a red and yellow ribbon to pin on MADAM TULIP'S dress. MADAM TULIP makes a low courtesy.)

MADAM TULIP. King Peony, I am grateful to you for this honor and I and my descendents of the Tulip family will wear the red and yellow with great pride.

KING PEONY. Rise, Madam Tulip. (*Looking around*) Now I think we are all here. Let us begin the dance.

QUEEN ROSE. Where are the musicians?

KING PEONY. Let the Katydids, the Crickets and all the little creatures of the woods furnish the music.

(Music outside. Enter EVENING PRIMROSE and TWILIGHT MOTH. She is in pale yellow and he is in gray.)

QUEEN ROSE. Here are our friends Evening Primrose and Twilight Moth who have come to dance for us.

(EVENING PRIMROSE and TWILIGHT MOTH dance)

(BUMBLE BEE buzzes in and little BUTTERCUP runs across the stage and hides. BUMBLE BEE sees CLOVER.)

BUMBLE BEE. At last, I've found you, Clover. *(He rushes towards her and PRINCE BUTTERFLY goes to her assistance and drives BUMBLE BEE away. CLOVER clings to PRINCE BUTTERFLY in gratitude.)*

CLOVER. Thank you, Prince Butterfly, you are so good and brave. Bumble Bee is very rough sometimes.

QUEEN ROSE. *(in reproach)* Clover, you must not trouble Prince Butterfly. Remember you are only a farmer's lass.

(CLOVER, sad and hurt, retires to the background and PRINCE BUTTERFLY looks indignant.)

KING PEONY. You are the guest of honor, so you shall be the first to choose a partner and lead the dance. Look about you and choose among these Flower Fairies. Choose the one that pleases

your fancy - Lily, Violet, Buttercup, Evening Primrose.

PRINCE BUTTERFLY. Thank you, King Peony. Among so many beautiful ones it is hard to choose. (*He looks from one to the other*) For a long time I have been looking for MY Flower Fairy.

QUEEN ROSE. And haven't you found her?

BUTTERFLY. Not until to-night.

QUEEN ROSE. (*excited*) To-night?

PRINCE BUTTERFLY. Yes. I have flitted thru many gardens and sipped honey from many flowers, but some were too gay, and some too proud and others, too vain.

(QUEEN ROSE, KING PEONY and MADAM TULIP look distressed and murmur, "too proud - too gay - too vain.")

BUTTERFLY. But to-night in this enchanted wood, I met one who is sweet, dear and simple and seems to think of others instead of herself and so to me the loveliest of all is - (*They all wait for his decision. He goes straight to CLOVER*) Clover.

(CLOVER is surprised as he leads her out, but smiles up at him. KING PEONY and QUEEN ROSE are very much troubled.)

QUEEN ROSE. Who would have thought it?

PRINCESS LILY. There is no accounting for tastes.

(SIR FIREFLY chooses VIOLET)

FIREFLY. Princess Violet, will you dance with me?

VIOLET. It is sweet to be chosen by you, Sir Firefly.

(JONQUIL takes BUTTERCUP, BUMBLE BEE chooses PRINCESS LILY and they all take their positions for the dance. TOM and EDITH come forward, but the Flower Fairies are too much absorbed in their own affairs to notice them at first.)

TOM. Are we awake or dreaming? (He pinches his arm.)

EDITH. I guess it's a dream with our eyes open. You haven't lost the wood sorrel, have you?

TOM. No, it's in my shoe. I wonder if it's the wood sorrel that has made me see all the strange things that have happened in these woods while we have been sitting under that big tree over there?

EDITH. I told you there were wonderful sights here if we had the eyes to see. You do believe in fairies now, don't you?

(Before TOM has time to answer the Flower Fairies see them.)

CLOVER. Oh, look. Some children have come to join in our frolic. My heart's so happy that my feet are dancey.

(CLOVER dances with PRINCE BUTTERFLY. Then all the fairies join in the dance.)

EDITH. We'll never forget this night in the Fairy Woods.

(The Flower Fairies dance gaily around EDITH and TOM as the curtain goes down.)

CURTAIN.



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